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Who Are the Troublemakers in Our Democracy?

Moderator, MARQUIS CHILDS

Speakers

MERLE MILLER

VICTOR RIESEL


ARNOLD FORSTER

—★—
COMING—

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Would We Gain or Lose by Ending the
Truce Talks?

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Who Are the Troublemakers in Our Democracy?

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THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

VICTOR RIESEL—Labor columnist for the New York Daily *Mirror* and Post-Hall Syndicate. Victor Riesel was born on March 26, 1913, and was brought up in the slums of New York City. After graduating from high school, he worked as an errand boy, in a hat factory, on a small newspaper, and managed to tour the working class sections of the country. He began as a labor reporter 20-odd years ago for a small wire service. In 1941 he joined the staff of the *New York Post*, where a year later his column became straight labor news and comment, and was being syndicated all over the country. In New York, Mr. Riesel switched from the *Post* to the *Mirror* about a year ago.

MERLE MILLER—Author of *The Judges and The Judged*, *The Sure Thing* and *That Winter*. Merle Miller was educated at the University of Iowa and the London School of Economics, and before the war was a Washington correspondent for the *Philadelphia Record*. During the war he founded and edited the Pacific edition of *Yank*, and eventually became Executive Editor of all fourteen editions. Later as a civilian, he worked for *Time*, then the *Saturday Review of Literature*, and until recently was an editor of *Harper's*. His latest book *The Judges and the Judged*, written under auspices of the American Civil Liberties Union, is a study of the publication, *Red Channels*.

ARNOLD FORSTER—Director of the civil rights activities and chief counsel to the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Mr. Forster joined the Law Department of the Anti-Defamation League twelve years ago, after supervising for three years a group of legal volunteers who worked with that agency. In January, 1946 he was appointed Civil Rights Director. At that time he introduced the League's annual Survey of Anti-Semitism in America. He is also author of the best seller, *A Measure of Freedom*, an outstanding work on prejudice.

Moderator—MARQUIS CHILDS—Author and syndicated columnist for United Features.

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Who Are the Troublemakers in Our Democracy?

Moderator Childs:

It is a matter of pride that Town Meeting tonight begins its eighteenth year on the air. Town Meeting is also proud to be one of six ABC programs honored by the Federation of Women's Clubs: America's Town Meeting received an award as the best radio program for adults. The awards are based on a poll taken by the State Radio Chairman of the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

We're going to hear some widely different answers to this question tonight, "Who Are the Troublemakers in Our Democracy?" These are the same differences that increasingly divide public opinion in America. Boring from within every organization they could infiltrate, the Communists have, in recent years, been exposed as conspirators bent on destroying the American system.

The long series of revelations has left a cloud of fear and suspicion, but now many believe that the zeal to root out the communist conspiracy has gone to excessive lengths, that the zeal by extremists of the right is aimed at anyone who ever dared express an idea or voice an opinion.

Here to talk about these conflicting views are three specialists in current trends. Mr. Arnold Forster is the Director of Civil Rights Activities and Chief Counsel of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. He has worked persistently to expose the peddlers of racial hate and is coauthor of the just published book, *The Troublemakers*.

Mr. Merle Miller, writer and reporter, was combat correspondent in World War II and founder of

the publication *Yank*. His latest book, *The Judges and the Judged*, a study of the publication *Red Channels*, has provoked wide controversy.

Mr. Victor Riesel is labor columnist for the *New York Daily Mirror* and the Post-Hall Syndicate. He has gained a wide reputation for exposing unions and union leaders who continue to follow communist direction and ideology.

Now we shall hear first from Mr. Forster.

Mr. Forster: Thank you, Mr. Childs. I find there is an astonishing stream of evidence pointing to the existence in our nation of a vast enterprise of racial and religious prejudice which feeds upon domestic dispute and capitalizes upon international strife.

The troublemakers are at the root of it. In this election campaign period, for example, they seek to undermine the democratic election process by the false injection of racial and religious issues into the contests. They've caused violence, desecration, and even murder.

In the last year, such widely separated places as Boston, Miami, Philadelphia, Dallas, and Cicero, Illinois, have been plagued by race riots, injuring people and destroying property. These troublemakers have created ghettos and slums in most American cities by barring Americans from living where they choose simply on the ground of race, color or creed.

These troublemakers, in other words, seek to divide Americans along racial and religious lines. This kind of bigotry, which I say is tremendously destructive, does

not victimize a single minority. The real victim is the American people, and those who would victimize the American people are troublemakers no less than those on the extreme right or the extreme left.

Mr. Childs: Thank you, Mr. Forster. And now we shall hear from Mr. Merle Miller.

Mr. Miller: I certainly agree with Arnold Forster that the kind of people he has talked about are villains, are troublemakers, are dangerous. I think, however, there are other groups, larger in number and some completely unorganized, who are at this second an equal and even perhaps greater danger.

I think these are the people who—and some of them are perfectly sincere—in their anxiety to fight the communists are willing to set aside the traditional American freedoms.

I think at the moment that every excess against freedom in the United States is, I would say, terrifyingly costly to this country in terms of prestige and influence among the millions in Asia and Africa and Europe who have to be convinced, whether we want to take the time or not, that when we ask their support in this defense of democracy, we mean democracy for everybody.

I think, too, that the most important communist threat to the United States comes from the Soviet Union, from behind the Iron Curtain, and heaven knows, not from the 31,600—and those are figures from Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, who knows what he is talking about—the 31,600 pip-squeaks and crackpots and zealots who are members of the American branch of the Communist party.

Let's just assume for a moment, as the *New York Times* did the other day, that for every member of the party there are ten fellow

travelers or sympathizers. That would still be less than one-half of one percent of the population of the United States. Sure, the problem has got to be met, but not at the price of crippling our freedom.

I think, too, that the espionage agents of the United States are not those who sometimes innocently and sometimes calculatingly in the past or yesterday afternoon or last week or in 1948 belonged to one or a dozen or forty communist front organizations. The true agent has probably never belonged to any front group. He probably doesn't have a party card. He is not a subscriber to the *Daily Worker*, and in all probability he belongs to the Taft wing of the Republican Party and possibly even the National Association of Manufacturers.

I can see this is an old-fashioned concept, and we kind of apologize for saying it today, but I don't: I think civil liberties are for everybody. I think they are for extremists of the left and right, for fascists and communists, for the enemies of freedom and its friends, and I think there is no middle way. We're either *for* or *against*.

Mr. Childs: Thank you, Mr. Miller. Now Mr. Riesel.

Mr. Riesel: I hope Mr. Miller doesn't fall in the well for looking at the stars. If he does, he should be thankful that there are some of us around who will help him get out.

I do think that we ought to cite—I'm a reporter and I don't like to talk in abstractions—I do think we ought to cite one of a series of facts that J. Edgar Hoover released only recently since it was raised.

Before we do, I am convinced that the communists, regardless of their number in organized minority, are the kind of minority that took Leningrad from a great na-

tion. Communism is a hangman of liberalism, which is why I think it is the troublemaker, not only here but across the world. We live in one world. There is a war on in this one world. Twenty-two thousand people—men, husbands, sons—are dead. If that's emotional, they're still dead.

The Soviets control 13 to 14 million square miles of the earth; seven hundred and fifty million people live under those so-called crackpots, as we just heard. That's one-third of the earth.

In this country, we found that J. Edgar Hoover's people, his agents, investigated 90,000 separate instances of threats to America's internal security, including the theft of atom bomb secrets by just three or four of these so-called crackpots, Harry Gold and the Rosenbergs.

Last year, the FBI agents went into 75,000. This year, the FBI handled 710,000 investigations. Part of the Bureau's job is to keep the country's 165,000 communist fronts under constant surveillance.

The importance of this was revealed recently by a man as reasonable and as middle of the road as Herbert Philbrick, hardly a man in the Taft Camp; he's in Eisenhower's Camp. Mr. Philbrick reports that the communists have actually milked to his knowledge \$50,000,000 a year out of the public.

And I say that these people are the hangmen of liberalism because they are aiming at ruling or destroying—rule or ruin.

Watch for communist philosophy; and as long as you have an agency directed from underneath, a subversive organization designed to destroy decency and liberalism, well, this is not a political organization; it's a plot. It's not an ideology, it's an invasion; and unless we realize that the communists

are the real menace—despite the anti-semites, the Gerald K. Smiths—the real crackpots, unless we stop looking at these people as no more a menace than the anti-semites, we'll fall in the well for looking at the stars. That is a great deal of trouble we'd get into.

Mr. Childs: Thank you, Mr. Riesel. Gentlemen, the discussion is open, and there is a wide area of disagreement between you, I can see that. Mr. Miller would like to say something about Mr. Riesel's remarks.

Mr. Miller: Well, I thought he convinced me—although I didn't need to be convinced—that the communists are real dreadful people, and they commit espionage, and they do all kinds of bad things. Now let's not argue about the communists and how evil they are. Let's talk about how many of them there are and what they have done.

I was very interested, Mr. Riesel, that you mentioned the Rosenbergs and Harry Gold. I was interested in that because I don't know. Maybe J. Edgar Hoover does—I don't think you know either. You see, I don't think you know who the communist is and who isn't. I don't think anybody does, except the FBI.

As far as Mr. Gold was concerned, you may remember he testified at the trial, and I quote: He said: "I was told by my superiors—meaning the espionage system of the Soviet Union—to stay away from the Communist Party, never to read the *Daily Worker*, never to read liberal publications or express liberal thoughts." I think what is happening is that, unhappily, a great many people, and I hope Mr. Riesel is not one of them, are being punished because they're liberals, not because they are communists.

Mr. Riesel: Mr. Miller, this *non sequitur* of yours amazes me. You have here a man who is a communist. I say the communists are the troublemakers. Just because this communist doesn't carry a party card and reads the *Herald Tribune* it doesn't make him any less a communist. You defeat your own argument. This man is a clever and camouflaged communist. That's why I think he's the troublemaker.

In Arnold Forster's book, *The Troublemakers*, and that's what we are discussing, we're trying to find out who the troublemakers are, not how they create the trouble.

Harry Gold was a Stalinist, he was a spy, he was a man who corrupted people into giving an enemy nation our atomic secrets; therefore as a Stalinist he was not a liberal. He was the enemy of liberalism; he wanted to destroy it by giving the ability to blast American democracy into nothing to the Soviet Union and thereby save them, according to information that General Groves gave me and I guess in testimony, save the Soviet Union three years in getting it.

How do you reconcile the fact that you are disdaining this man because he is a particularly clever communist? All communists are clever. I don't make them out to be idiots. But you're trying to make them out to be idiots—weird people who sneak around the corners.

Mr. Miller: Mr. Riesel, either you misunderstood what I had to say intentionally or accidentally. What I was trying to say and what I think I said at least once, let me say again. The real troublemakers in our democracy in 1952, because there are so many of them, are the people who simply because in the past you have been liberal, or belonged to a front organization, are causing you to suffer. I think the publishers of a publication called

Red Channels are troublemakers in our democracy today. I think the publishers of *Counter Attack*, the same people, are troublemakers in our democracy today. I think that Senator Joe McCarthy is a troublemaker in our democracy today and a dangerous one. (*Applause*)

Mr. Childs: Mr. Forster, I'd like to get you into this discussion. Do you think the troublemakers can be defined in political terms?

Mr. Forster: My attitude, Mr. Childs, is that the enemies of both these fellows are plagues on the American democracy. I think the American people is a healthy people. I think a communist is recognized, so long as he's a conscious communist and acts like one. I think a man on the extreme right who thinks and talks and acts like a Nazi is again obvious.

The problem I'm concerned about is the American who is unaware that he carries an un-American infection in him, that he is carrying the kind of bigotry in a gentle, polite way, when he talks like an American and believes in the Constitution, yet would bar a person from moving into his neighborhood, or coming to his college, simply on the ground of the other person's difference in race, color or creed.

Now I say the troublemaker is the one who would play on the innocent American, who doesn't realize how he is participating in dividing the American people. And the troublemakers of the extreme left and the troublemakers of the extreme right, I think, can be excised from the democratic fabric without too much trouble because they reveal themselves for what they are. (*Applause*)

Mr. Riesel: I think Merle Miller makes one grievous error. In his great desire which is shared by all

of us, obviously—to attack the anti-Semites—and his great desire to attack the tactics of Senator McCarthy, in his great desire to say that there shall be no blacklisting, he overlooks one thing. Regardless of what Senator McCarthy has done, where were the liberals, for example, when some of us newspaper people laid bare for 15 years the espionage tactics, the infiltration into the government, and the labor movement of the communists? Regardless of what crime *Red Channels* has committed, it could not have committed this “crime”—and I use that in the sense that Merle Miller would—if, for example, people like Philip Loeb had not joined in writing a letter asking for civil liberties for a Stalinist at a time when the communists and the Nazis were engaged in a love feast between 1939 and June 22, 1941.

The listing is the final effect, not the cause. The cause lies in these people having joined in giving American prestige or prestige in America to pro-communist fronts. Mao-tse Tung's troops are now killing our people, making a farce of our evident desire for peace at Panmunjon. You wouldn't have people listed as friends of the Soviet Chinese.

Now I say this, that when you overlook the fact that this is an organized plot, when you overlook the fact, for example, that Nehru gets up in the Indian Congress and says that the communists are the troublemakers—and these are his very words—that “in the effort to build a democracy in India just left by imperialist England, you find that the communists want to destroy us. There shall be a vacuum of decency, and they shall invade and control India just as they did China.”

That's why I think Mr. Miller is overlooking the real threat. And when you get down to the so-called attack upon liberalism in the name of communism, I want Mr. Miller to cite me a case. I want time, dates and places. I maintain that neither in Hollywood . . .

Mr. Miller: It would be quite easier if Mr. Riesel would allow me to say a word. We got rather far afield.

If this program had been broadcast in 1945, it would have been very interesting and apropos to talk about the mistakes of the liberals. It is not being broadcast in 1945; it is being broadcast in 1952.

People did make mistakes, some calculatingly, some innocently, who today aren't working because of what they did in 1945—some of them, I think, among the best artists, writers, dancers, singers and actors in America—and I say this is too great a price to pay.

Let's talk about another field. Just let me talk for one moment. —Mr. Riesel talked at great length although very eloquently, and I won't get into India and China because we're talking about the troublemakers in our democracy, which I assume means the United States.

Let's have some facts. There is a story, and I guess we'll assume it's a good anti-communist newspaper—the *New York Times*—although editors of *Counter Attack* don't always agree. There was a story on Sunday, a front page story, Mr. Riesel, by Benjamin Fine, the education editor, and I think a very good education editor. I can't read the whole story; it takes almost half a column, three-quarters of a column, on the front page and almost a full page inside. He's

talking about "textbook censors alarm educators." There is another field we haven't talked about. "In some instances," he says, "American librarians have been persuaded to remove textbooks and not to order materials that might create a controversy in the community. Self-appointed committees are being organized"—e.g., Scarsdale, N.Y.—"in many areas to 'screen' textbooks used by colleges or by the general population. Books that have been in use for years suddenly become suspect when an unfavorable review appears."

I say when it gets into the field of education, books that are not communist textbooks, books which some small segment of the community disagrees with, and yet they disappear, the people who want them to disappear are the real troublemakers.

Mr. Childs: I'd like to give Mr. Forster a chance to comment on that.

Mr. Forster: Both these gentlemen, Mr. Childs, have had full and free discussion somewhat at my expense. I think that free discussion is good and healthy so long as it's honest discussion, and these fellows here have been quite honest.

I'm concerned about those people who would distort issues, who would falsify the question and the problem, who would inject into legitimate American political discussion issues that don't belong and to smell out legitimate controversy.

I think Mr. Miller begins to touch on it when he talks about the fight against modern education in America. Here we have the greatest educational system in the world; yet there is a development in the last few years which would undermine and de-

stroy by the false injection of the charge of socialism and communism on the modern educational system.

We have a civil rights issue, and it seems to be the paramount domestic issue in the current political campaign, and yet there are those Americans who are falsely injecting irrelevant questions into the problems of the civil rights program.

And I can go on to the other issues that confront the American people from the United Nations to genocide to FEPC, and constantly we find so-called Americans injecting into these legitimate issues illegitimate arguments; and I say these people who do that are the real troublemakers.

Mr. Childs: Mr. Miller has shown wonderful self-restraint.

Mr. Riesel: Well, I will admit that there's been no suppression of Riesel on this program. I think that there has been an overemphasis and eagerness to overemphasize the so-called suppression of decency and free speech and free education by Mr. Miller. Well, this is an evil, Mr. Miller quotes. Certainly we fight it, just as we fight to have the Ku Klux Klan and the Imperial Wizard arrested. We've done it as recently as the arrest of the Imperial Wizard just a day or two ago. But I do say that you have a different problem, but before we get to that let's point this out.

Howard Fast, who was in constant communication with the enemies of this nation, writing letters, propaganda letters for Mao-tse-Tung, the Peiping Government, is permitted to speak at Hunter College by Professor Schuster. He was followed by another communist. Howard Fast is permitted to speak at Yale. And through the United States you have

magnificent freedom of speech. As a matter of fact, you even have the substitution, for example, of the energies of these people in free riots for my friend, Walt Kelly here—Pogo for President, and I told him I'd come out for Pogo in this program—but the point is that if we didn't fight the kind of troublemakers that I say exist more potently than the few things that Mr. Miller can cite, then I say there is no suppression. We've made magnificent advances in the South and the arrest of the Klan and the indictment of these Klansmen prove it. The Hollywood picture, such as "Deadline USA" which crusades for a free press, the pictures like "Cross Fire," the attacks on anti-semitism show no decimation of any freedom in Hollywood.

Mr. Miller: I'm glad you talked about Hollywood, because I want to make a point about Hollywood. I don't know how long it has been that the House Committee on un-American Activities has been looking into Hollywood. I know it is at least ten years. They have heard all kinds of witnesses. They have certainly proved that at one time or another, right up to last year, there was in Hollywood a number of communist cells. They have never proved until this moment in ten years of investigation that one subversive communist idea ever got into any movie.

Well, that's not enough, quite. Last week, as perhaps most of you read, a list was sent to Hollywood—a list of two hundred persons. I assume this list is somewhat like the list in *Red Channels*, and all of these people are being called in by the heads of the studios to explain their affiliations in the past.

I say that in that kind of atmosphere, Hollywood will go the

way of, well, I'll say radio and television in general. If one human being, Mr. Riesel, if one human being who is not now nor has he ever been nor was he in the past, a communist, is suffering because of a black list, then I think the entire industry of radio and television has something to apologize for, and if it happens in Hollywood, so do they.

Mr. Riesel: I've been opposed to black lists ever since it was developed by the kind of people who created the coal mine police to shoot down the union organizers in Pennsylvania, the coal fields and the steel mill areas and Homestead, and all the rest. This isn't a black list anymore than Arnold Forster's Anti-Defamation League's drawing up of anti-Semites is a black list.

Mr. Forster: Oh, come now, Mr. Riesel. Excuse the interruption, but there is a very real difference between the kind of list that *Red Channels* is and the list of anti-Semites in a measure of freedom, and the difference is this. We had the people listed speak out of their own mouths. We did not go to outside sources and use the authorities of outside people to include persons as bigots. We set forth what an American said and then we asked the reader to judge for himself whether or not that person was a real American or a bigot. That's far different from going to ask a third person what he thinks about a first person. (Applause)

Mr. Riesel: We were not talking about *Red Channels*. We were talking about the right of American citizens. Just as you have the right to draw up lists of people that you thought were subversive, I say that there are those who have the right to draw up lists of people who are members of the Com-

munist party, devoted to the invasion by the Soviet Union of our decency in democracy, who work with the Nazis in the picketing of a White House, who said it was a matter of taste, whether you were for the Nazis or against it, when six million Jews were being gas chambered. Many of the people on the list now drawn up in Hollywood were on the lists which were pro-Nazi and worked with the Nazis. And Mr. Forster knows it that in Hollywood in Los Angeles, the German-American Bund and the cells of the Communist Party worked with the Nazis in Los Angeles during the Nazi-Communist Pact. They picketed Mr. Roosevelt in the White House. If it's all right to black-list Nazis, I say it is all right to black-list communists.

Mr. Childs: Mr. Miller, your comment on that.

Mr. Miller: Two things. First of all, lest anybody get from what Mr. Riesel has said a wrong impression: Nobody has said, Mr. Forster has not said, and I have not said and I never will that Mr. Kirkpatrick and Keenan and Bierly—who were and one of them no longer is—the publishers of *Red Channels*—did not have a right to publish such a list. They most certainly do. Anybody has a right to publish any kind of a list anytime he wishes. This is civil liberties.

Now the second point you have just made is on lists of communists, just as you have a right to make lists of Nazis. My point is that nobody knows, of the 151 in *Red Channels*, whether one is a communist, or ten are communists or 151 or none. It doesn't matter very much because at this moment they are all suffering

economically, spiritually and every other way and I say that such a list is indefensible and evil.

Mr. Forster: I don't think, Mr. Childs, it's a matter of lists. I think it's a matter of facts. If you can present to the American people facts about an individual then you can rely upon the American people to decide whether or not they want to hear these people on the radio, see them on the stage or on the motion picture screen. It's not lists; it's facts. What have these people done; what have they said. If they have done and said those things which are inimical to this country, I for one would not be interested in seeing them in a motion picture; but it's not lists, it's facts.

Mr. Childs: In other words you feel that you have the documentation where you would feel that other lists do not have documentation.

Mr. Forster: No. If *Red Channels* has the facts with respect to an individual then in that respect *Red Channels* is doing an important and a valuable and an honest service. If I have the facts, then I consider our bringing them to the American people is performing a function. If neither of us has the facts, then we're doing a disservice to the American people.

Mr. Riesel: Briefly this, that the listings—you must not lose sight of this, all you people who applaud what is apparently an infringement on civil liberties—all you people don't want to lose sight of the fact that these people signed letters and joined committees which attacked the destruction of elementary jurisprudence in the Soviet Union.

QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

Mr. Childs: Now we come to one of the most interesting phases of our Town Meeting Program—questions from the audience here in New York City.

Man: Mr. Forster, in view of the similarity of the attacks upon the schools' and colleges' curricula, has anyone sought to find who is behind the known attackers? In other words, we have heard of a man named Wall, for instance, and who would be behind such a man?

Mr. Forster: The Public Education Association, the American Council on Education and many other outstanding educational organizations have looked into the attacks on modern education. They found, for example, men like Allen Zoll, only recently moved into the educational field, as an attacker of well-known and great educators like Willard Goslin of Pasadena.

Man: Mr. Miller, how can you reconcile attacking the people who are using some of the tactics that the communists invented to fight communism, which are the only tactics the communists know? That's hitting below the belt. How can you reconcile fighting these people who are not fascists who are also fighting fascists?

Mr. Miller: I have been asked how I can reconcile not fighting communists in the same way they fight. I think the communists fight justifiably. I do not believe that in order to defeat 31,600 or 360,000 that you have to use the methods of the communists. I believe and would be distressed if I did not that America is strong enough and the democracies are strong enough. Maybe these are cliches, but I think good ones—that they can de-

feat the communists by democratic methods; and if we cannot defeat the communists and the fascists by these methods, then God help us.

Mr. Childs: Do you feel that answers your question?

Man: No. I want to know how the Czechoslovakian people, which had a democracy which many people consider far superior to ours, were not able to defeat communism through democratic principles?

Mr. Miller: Because inside of Czechoslovakia was a large part of the Soviet Army, and I think, second, that Mr. Herbert Phillbrick—I might as well quote him myself—I believe he is perfectly accurate when he says the job of fighting a communist is a job for experts. It must not be done by name-callers or flag wavers. It can only be done by people who are working for the FBI, many of them within the communist organization. I think that is a democratic way to do it, and there is no other.

Mr. Childs: Mr. Riesel wants to comment on that.

Mr. Riesel: I think we ought to slay this little legend of Mr. Miller's about the 31,000 little people. There are ten big unions in the very gut of our war machine with 500,000 members and \$50,000,000 in their treasury—in the copper field, communications, public affairs, the government, shipping — led by members of the communist party in this country. That is not 31,000. Anyone of these leaders working in coordination with a given signal from the communist party headquarters in New York or Cominform headquarters in Bucharest can

paralyze, for days if not months, our war machine, the production of jet and radar, atomic submarines. Don't let's dismiss the communists as just 31,000 members..

Mr. Miller: I think the way to fight, however many there are, is through the government association which was created—the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Man: Mr. Riesel, don't you think that men like Senator McCarthy and Senator McCarran have imperiled our liberties far more than any communist group has done or can possibly do?

Mr. Riesel: You're the young man who hissed me. Don't you think that denying me the right to make my statement imperils my liberties and yours too by adopting that kind of anti-democratic attitude? I think that if the liberal movement had joined me in the days when I got beaten by the Ku Klux Klan, got hauled physically out of Father Coughlin's Church, where I went in cooperation with Arnold Forster and the ADL, and joined me in the fight also on communists and helped to expose the Hisses and all the rest, there would have been no room for any conservative group. And furthermore let me tell you this, that in 1946 I disagreed as I do now with the conservative political philosophy of Senator McCarthy. He was running against a friend of mine, Senator Bob LaFollette. It was the communists—as McCarthy will tell you, as he has said it in public—who would block LaFollette, because he refused to be isolationist. And a political action committee of the CIO in Wisconsin joined in the support of McCarthy and he was thus elected. Don't come to me and ask me whether they imperilled democracy. It was the communists

who did it and who created the vacuum. Go back to your political history.

Mr. Childs: May I just comment Mr. Riesel, that I'm sure your right to speak will never be imperiled. Mr. Miller has a brief comment.

Mr. Miller: What Mr. Riesel saying is that a lot of people were not quite as alert as he was in 1945, or '38 or '39 or '41 or whenever, at recognizing the communist menace. What he also seems to be saying is that since this wasn't the case, all right, Senator McCarthy is OK. There'll

Mr. Forster: It seems to me, Mr. Childs, there is no basic disagreement between Mr. Miller and Mr. Riesel. They both agree that the communists are a menace. They're simply disagreeing on the technique for fighting and wiping out communism.

Lady. Mr. Forster, is exposure the best technique in combating troublemakers, or does exposure merely give them added publicity?

Mr. Forster: I think that the American people have an abiding and true sense of justice. I think if the American people have the facts, you can rely on them to come to a wise choice. And I think the way to mislead the American people is not to give them the facts; and therefore I would say yes, the right way to destroy bigotry and troublemaking is to expose it to the sunlight of American public opinion.

Man: Mr. Miller, aren't the greatest troublemakers all of those who flout the democratic process who have no confidence in it? That starts with the Supreme Court in many of the decisions recently.

Mr. Miller: Well, I can't com

agent, not being a lawyer, thank heavens, about what the Supreme Court has done recently and so can answer your question simply yes. Of course the real trouble-makers are all the people who don't believe in democracy.

Man: Mr. Riesel, if you define communism as a conspiracy, which you have done on several occasions, I wonder what you think then constitutes the extreme left, and is there any merit in it?

Mr. Riesel: Why you should ask me a complex question after I endorsed Pogo for President I don't know, Mr. Kelly. The extreme left does not include the communists. To talk of the extreme left is to talk of an extreme left-wing political position. Communists are a conspiracy. They should be handled as a police problem, but at the same time, if you have to drive them out of the union, I think you have to deal with them within the framework of a non-police problem and therefore fight them and expose them and consider them the menace. Does that answer your question?

Mr. Kelly: In that it agrees with Mr. Miller's position, to some extent, yes. I still wonder if you see any merit in expressions of the extreme left wing of any regulated democratic party?

Mr. Riesel: Yes, I do. I'm glad you asked me that question, Mr. Kelly. I think Pogo should adopt that in his program. There should be at the center at every crossroads, every college should have its radical professor. American progress and the status quo depends on the right of the American people to have their radicalism. It's got nothing to do with communism, which is a plot and not a political philosophy.

Man: Mr. Forster, what have we done to combat the forces of anti-semitism and anti-catholicism, and are these efforts sufficient?

Mr. Forster: Well, obviously, while we still have racial and religious prejudice, the efforts have not been sufficient, but the American people have done much. Ten years ago, for example, we had no legislation on any state level of any serious importance barring discrimination on racial and religious lines. Today we have many states which outlaw discrimination and employment, which outlaw discrimination in education, which outlaw discrimination in housing. These are steps forward, this is progress. The mere fact that a civil rights program is the single most important issue of the current national political campaign to me is a sign of progress. The American people are concerned about prejudice, and they want something done about it.

Man: Mr. Miller, does the un-American Activities Committee do more harm than it does good?

Mr. Miller: Oh, brother. In my opinion, in the '30's it did more harm than good. Its over-all program in my opinion has done more harm than good. I must say to its credit that its methods in the last three or four years have been better than they ever were in the past, but I don't like congressional committees which act as jurors and judges and act as prosecuting lawyers as well. The over-all history—despite the fact that it did of course expose Alger Hiss, if he is guilty—I think that its over-all history has done more harm to American freedom than it has done good.

Mr. Riesel: There isn't time to

argue, but for the record, may I dissent?

Man: Mr. Riesel, what conclusions with regard to troublemakers do you draw from the employment of labor racketeers by the Phelps Dodge Corporation as developed by the Kefauver hearings of last year?

Mr. Riesel: You put me in a very embarrassing position. You accuse a corporation on the air of hiring labor racketeers. I think the hiring of labor racketeers by a corporation or union is abysmally wrong, and I say so every day. Whether the Phelps Dodge people entered into negotiations—I think you refer to the Anastasia story.

Man: I am referring to the Anastasia story and the testimony as developed by the Kefauver Committee last year.

Mr. Riesel: Well, Anastasia's Company is the pestilence of the waterfront, and any party who uses them is certainly an enemy of democracy.

Man: Does the use of them represent a real danger?

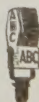
Mr. Riesel: The use of racketeers represents a real danger.

Man: Where does it come from?

Mr. Riesel: I don't know.

Man: I'm asking you who these racketeers were hired by?

Mr. Childs: I'm sorry to interrupt, but our time is just about up. Thank you, Mr. Miller, you Mr. Arnold Forster, and you Mr. Victor Riesel for a most thoughtful and fairminded discussion in the best tradition of Town Meeting. So plan to be with us next week and every week at the sound of the Crier's Bell.



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FOR FURTHER STUDY OF THIS WEEK'S TOPIC



Background Questions

- A. Are the troublemakers in our democracy the extremists of the right or left?
1. Which group has more grass roots sympathy? Which is better organized?
 2. Do communism and fascism pose different types of threats to our democracy?
 3. What segments of our national life are most threatened by subversion from extremists?—government, the media (films, radio, television, and press), labor unions, professions (primarily education).
- B. What is the character of the communist threat?
1. Is the communist problem basically one of pressure from without (war, espionage, sabotage) or primarily a problem of domestic subversion?
 2. Is the threat of subversion by communists more potent because they are supported by a foreign power?
 3. Is it more potent because communism appeals to respectable desires for social reform and protection of civil liberties, and because it has adopted the liberal clichés?
- C. What is the character of the rightist threat?
1. Is the primary purpose of some of these groups to foment racial and religious prejudice, or are they motivated by political considerations?
 2. How widespread is "McCarthyism" and what does it signify in our national political life?
 3. Have rightist organizations gained in respectability and influence since the recognition of the communist menace?
 4. Is academic freedom being stifled by reactionary groups in the name of anticommunism?
- D. Is the job of combatting subversion, espionage and sabotage primarily or exclusively one for experts (FBI, etc.)?
2. Have Congressional investigations functioned effectively in dealing with this problem?
 3. Have extremists of the right or left clarified or confused the problem?
 4. Have private individuals or organizations helped combat subversion?
 5. Have the loyalty and security programs been effective?
 6. Is the problem of combatting subversion primarily one of education?
- E. How can we preserve our civil liberties while fighting subversion?
1. Is there a danger that we may foster one type of totalitarianism in our efforts to combat another?
 2. Is any citizen who fails to keep himself well informed a potential troublemaker in our democracy?

BEHIND THE CRIER'S BELL

Who—beside yourself—is reading these pages? We asked the Bulletin's chargé d'affaires about this last week and gathered some interesting facts.

In the first place, since it was first broadcast in 1935, approximately five million copies of the "Town Meeting" texts have been requested by listeners. Some groups and individuals have been subscribing continuously for the seventeen years that "Town Meeting" has been on the air.

Libraries form the backbone of this steady subscribers' list—public libraries, those in schools, churches and business organizations and those maintained overseas by the United States Information Service. There are individual subscribers from every state in the Union, as well as the territories. A number of American citizens living abroad use the Bulletin as a means of keeping abreast of current thinking and issues. For the same reason, foreign diplomatic personnel find it a valuable key to American thought and opinion.

Every week into Town Hall's Bulletin office comes a stream of letters and visitors. Many of the latter are students who need information to prepare for a debate or a term paper. (College and high school people are divided about 50-50.) One graduate student, now well acquainted with the Town Hall staff, is writing his doctor's thesis on the subject, "America's Town Meeting of the Air." And the other day, a New Yorker who was planning a trip to Europe dropped in to purchase bulletins with pertinent background information. He went away with texts of 29 different broadcasts.

Of course, interest varies from program to program. In recent weeks the broadcast which stimulated most requests was the discussion "Do We Want a Military Man in the White House?" (April 15) with Pauline Frederick and Kenneth Crawford. Broadcasts relating to the coming elections are of mounting interest. The topics of war and peace always "pull" mail. But the all-time high was reached in January, 1951, when "Town Meeting" brought together Billy Graham and Dr. Ralph Sockman to discuss, "Do We Need the Old Time Religion?"